

# **EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

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## **REMARKS BY U.S. – BANGLADESH TIGER SHARK 13 EXERCISE CLOSING CEREMONY**

### **1st Para Commando Battalion Jalalabad Cantonment Sylhet September 27, 2012**

Brigadier General AKA Abdullahil Baquee, Commandant, School of Infantry and Tactics

First Para-Commandos Battalion Commander LTC Mustafizur Rahman

Asalam m'laikum and good morning.

Today the world is a safer place.

Today Bangladesh is a safer place.

Freedom is not free. The histories of both America and Bangladesh well illustrate the high cost of freedom ... cost in terms of spilled blood and expended treasure.

Sustaining freedom also is not free.

We all know well that there are evil, destructive forces in the world that mean to destroy our freedom, our open societies, our tolerance for differences ...

These evil forces seek to impose upon us a regimen of intolerance, hatred, narrowness, violence.

Indeed, if we value our freedom, we must defend our freedom. This is nothing new ... as you scroll back through history, you will find bloodthirsty despots, savage, intolerant ideologies, narrow, mean-spirited people who sought to destroy our freedom and impose their will on us.

History will also show how those who love freedom have successfully defended it. ... and that is what Tiger Shark 13 exercise is all about: freedom loving nations working together step-by-step to strengthen our shared capacity to confront terrorists and evil-doers in the defense of freedom.

This ceremony today marks yet another chapter in the ever-deepening partnership between America and Bangladesh to defend freedom. This critical partnership works for the benefit of the people of America, the people of South Asia, and, most particularly, the people of Bangladesh. I am so proud that this partnership in defense of freedom is going from strength to strength.

Over the past four weeks, U.S. and Bangladesh military personnel have worked together to hone their skills to confront terrorism and violent extremism. We hope our Bangladeshi colleagues can benefit from the lessons we have learned often the hard way on how best to fight terrorism.

Using nearly 50 computers and other IT hardware provided by the American trainers, participants drilled hard on essential elements of planning, acquiring resources, and undertaking operations against those who seek to undermine freedom and democracy in Bangladesh. In a classic example of effective leadership by example, Battalion Commander LTC Mustafiz himself undertook the training. Colonel Mustafiz, I can think of no better way for you to lead and command your troops ... well done!

Participants also studied and exercised critical intelligence skills, vital to successfully confronting terrorists and violent extremists.

The exercise also included field exercises that included medical training, rifle marksmanship, and room/building clearing techniques, all of which further enhance the participants' effectiveness in confronting enemies of the nation.

I am not surprised to learn from the trainers that the Bangladeshi participants were fully outstanding. Exemplifying the extraordinary character of the Bangladeshi people, the participants quickly adapted the theoretical aspects of the training to the on-the-ground realities of Bangladesh, thus making the training more meaningful and effective.

Further enhancing the impact of the training, the Bangladesh military selected participants from a range of fields, including special operations, SWADS, Intelligence Forces and general Army. This jointness is, of course, the key to success, and I applaud the Bangladesh military in its success in breaking down the stovepipes that traditionally divide the various elements of the military. Such jointness is essential in successfully confronting, engaging and overcoming terrorists and violent extremists.

As witnessed in this just-concluded U.S.-Bangladesh exercise and as I've seen in all of my engagements with the Bangladesh military, I think the security of the nation is in good hands.

I look forward to further deepening, broadening and strengthening the military-to-military partnership between America and Bangladesh. Today, in Hawaii representatives of the Bangladesh and American militaries are in the second day of discussions on how to further bolster our military-military cooperation. I am sure that these discussions will reveal even more avenues for bilateral military engagement.

I will conclude as I began by expressing my deep pride as Bangladesh's partner in helping to strengthen the nation's capacity to protect itself from those who seek to destroy it. As I stand before you as the America's ambassador to wonderful Bangladesh, I recommit myself,

my mission and my nation to sustaining, deepening and expanding our military partnership, to the benefit of the region and the people of both America and, in particular, Bangladesh.

Thank you.

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